

Regular Meeting
April 2, 2007

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, April 2, 2007 at 6:00pm in the Panel Room of the 1767 Courthouse.

Present: Jimmy Alligood, Louis Belfield, Ralph Cole, Jerry Downum, Bill Gardner, Kenny Goodwin, Harry Lee Winslow.

Chairman Ralph Cole called the meeting to order and Commissioner Alligood presented the invocation.

Consent Agenda

By motion of Commissioner Belfield, the Consent Agenda, including the minutes and the following budget amendments and tax releases, was approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Budget Amendments

5352 DSS	increase	\$11,705	EDTAP Transportation Funding
5352 DSS	increase	\$19,002	Rural Grant Program Transportation Funding
4931 Clean Water Mgmt.Trust Fund/Stormwater Planning	increase	\$97,000	CWMTF grant for stormwater planning project
6132 Recreation	increase	\$27,840	State Grant to construct camping platforms at John's Island

Tax Releases

SW Copeland	\$124.83	listed in Martin County
RM Goodwin	\$103.14	vehicle traded

April Events

Nancy Nicholls, Director of the Chowan County Tourism Development Authority, presented information about events taking place in Edenton and Chowan County in the coming weeks. Those events include:

Cycle NC's Spring Ride will take place in Edenton and Chowan County April 13-15. Cycle NC's inaugural spring ride was in Edenton in 2004, and the cyclists and their guests enjoyed Edenton so much, they are returning. There are 593 registered cyclists so far, which is the largest number ever registered, with 390 registered campers. Indoor and outdoor camping will be available at John A. Holmes High School. Entertainment is planned for that weekend for the visitors and local residents as well. Mrs. Nicholls invited the Commissioners and the audience to participate in the events.

The Pilgrimage is scheduled for April 20-21 with more than a dozen homes, four churches and four public buildings on the tour. The Garden Conservancy Tour is also scheduled for the same weekend.

Of particular note is the exhibition of North Carolina's copy of the Bill of Rights in the 1767 Courthouse April 18-21. Tours for school children and the public will be available. Edenton is one of six locations in North Carolina where the Bill of Rights will be exhibited before it is on permanent display in Raleigh. With pride, Chowan County can boast that of the six sites, the 1767 Courthouse is the only one where original discussions of the Bill of Rights took place.

Mrs. Nicholls noted that the American Legion Hogfest and the Rocky Hock Opry is scheduled for the last weekend in April. She invited the Commissioners and the audience to participate in any and all upcoming events being hosted by Chowan County and Edenton.

North Carolina Housing Financing Agency Program

County Attorney Peter Rascoe introduced Wes Haskett. Mr. Haskett is Acting Planner for Chowan County during Elizabeth Bryant's maternity leave. Mr. Haskett introduced Chris Hilbert of Holland Consulting Planners, who is the Project Manager for Chowan County's North Carolina Housing Financing Agency Program grant award. The grant amount is \$200,000 and is projected to rehabilitate five homes of elderly or disabled homeowners. Mr. Hilbert presented documents for the Board's consideration, including a financial management resolution, a program assistance policy, citizen participation plan, temporary relocation policy, local economic benefit plan, a rehabilitation contract award policy, an equal employment and procurement policy and a code of conduct policy. By motion of Commissioner Alligood, all eight documents were approved.

Ayes 7

No 0

Schedule Board of Equalization and Review

By motion of Commissioner Downum, the Commissioners scheduled a meeting of the Board of Equalization and Review for Monday, May 7 at 9:30a.m. in the Panel Room of the 1767 Courthouse, the Board's regular meeting place.

Ayes 7

No 0

Verizon Tower Application

Planner Wes Haskett presented the Planning Board's recommendation that the Verizon Tower Application proposed for construction at 3443 Rocky Hock Road, be approved. The tower will be a self-supporting lattice type tower of 300 feet, placed on vacant farmland more than 1000 feet off the road. Robert H and Emmett E Winborne are the landowners. The Planning Board determined that the construction of the tower is necessary to provide for continuous and non-interrupted cellular service.

Verizon Attorney Steve Romaine discussed Verizon's proposal to provide enhanced mobile and in-building coverage. He also stated that the only other tower structure within the area is owned by US Cellular, which does not provide the target coverage. The Verizon tower will provide space for four additional co-locators.

Pierce Lawing, a resident of Arrowhead Beach, spoke in support of the Verizon tower for improved cellular coverage to the Arrowhead Beach area. He noted the change from landline phones to cellular phones, and talked about the amount of money that can be saved by families wishing to convert to cellular products, if the coverage is provided to the area.

Commissioner Alligood related times with the Rescue Squad when cellular service is dead in the northern end of the County, in the Arrowhead Beach area, as well as in the southern sector of the County. He recalled times during the Hurricane Isabel recovery when the only phone service available was cellular service and how it was limited across the County. He said that he views the construction of this tower as a means to improve public safety for Chowan County.

Commissioner Alligood made a motion that the County accept the recommendation of the Planning Board and approve the application for the construction of a cellular tower by Verizon on property at 3443 Rocky Hock Road, in compliance with all ordinances and technical issues.

Ayes 7

No 0

Commissioner Gardner noted a letter received from Jim Brock, where Mr. Brock expressed concern about the availability of cellular service throughout the County. Commissioner Gardner made a motion that the County staff develop a long range plan to provide improved cellular phone coverage for the entire County. Mr. Rascoe stated that some preliminary work has begun to accomplish this and he will report to the Board on the results of this study.

Ayes 7

No 0

Norfolk Southern Railroad Right of Way

Mr. Rascoe presented information concerning the County's attempts to secure an arrangement with Norfolk Southern Railroad whereby NSRR would abandon the unused segments of the railroad right-of-way traversing downtown Edenton. The County is interested in this property, particularly near the Public Safety Center, presently under construction, for an additional entrance into the Public Safety Center area, and for additional greenspace.

Mr. Rascoe stated that the track property has been abandoned for all intent and purpose, the Town of Edenton mows the grass, but the property has not been abandoned by the law under the railroad statutes. After many attempts over an eight-year period to bring the railroad company to a discussion, without any response from the railroad company, the County was forced to engage attorneys Parker and Poe from Raleigh to pursue this matter

with the railroad company. Parker and Poe reports that a third party petition is now being developed.

Public Comment

None offered.

Chairman Cole noted that at the May meeting, a dedication in honor of Chairman Wayne Goodwin will be presented at the Northern Chowan County Community Center.

The meeting was adjourned.

Nancy B. Morgan, County Clerk